



Plenary sitting

B9-0183/2023

14.3.2023

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on Tunisia: Recent attacks against freedom of expression and association and trade unions, in particular the case of journalist Nouredine Boutar (2023/2588(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

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European Parliament resolution on Tunisia: Recent attacks against freedom of expression and association and trade unions, in particular the case of journalist Nouredine Boutar (2023/2588(RSP))

The European Parliament,

having regard to Rules 144(5) and 132(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

- A. Whereas President Saïed's reforms continue causing severe democratic backsliding in Tunisia; whereas the legislative elections had an exceptional low turnout showing the population's mistrust in the authorities; whereas a severe crackdown against trade unions, political opponents, journalists, prosecutors and civil society takes place across Tunisia, also targeting Black migrants after the heinous and racist speech of President Saïed;
- B. Whereas decree laws adopted by the President continue undermining the independence of the judiciary and severely restrict the freedom of expression and association as well as trade unions' rights;
- C. Whereas Tunisian authorities have arrested journalists, including Nouredine Boutar, director of the independent Mosaique FM radio station, as well as leading political activists, prosecutors and trade union representatives, placed in pre-trial detention pending investigation on politically motivated and unfounded allegations;
- D. Whereas the population took to the streets in response to the call of the UGTT to protest against the authoritarian drift of President Saïed and to urge a speedy resumption of the national dialogue;
 1. Calls on the President and the Tunisian authorities to put an immediate end to the crackdown against trade unions, civil society, independent judiciary, migrants and political opponents; urges the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release journalist Nouredine Boutar and all those arbitrarily detained and withdraw all charges;
 2. Condemns the detention of Anis Kaabi and the harassment and summons issued against several UGTT leaders and members, which seriously undermines union activity, violates fundamental union rights, and contravenes the ILO conventions ratified by Tunisia as well as the provisions of the Constitution on union freedoms and the right to strike; condemns the expulsion of Esther Lynch, ETUC General Secretary, from Tunisia as a blatant attack on UGTT and global trade union solidarity; calls on the government to ensure social dialogue, to respect collective agreements and to take action to tackle the cost-of-living crisis, including by supporting the most vulnerable part of the population;
 3. Urges the Tunisian authorities to abide by their international obligations to respect human rights, including trade union and workers' rights and the rights to freedom of expression

and association; condemns any interference with the editorial stance of Mosaique FM, and any independent media outlet, as a gross violation of the ICCPR, ACHR, and Tunisian Constitution;

4. Urges the Tunisian authorities to end the state of emergency, immediately reinstate judges and prosecutors arbitrarily dismissed, and reverse all measures undermining judicial independence;
5. Calls on the EU Institutions to denounce the deterioration of the rule of law, respect for human and trade unions' rights in Tunisia; urges the next Foreign Affairs Council to conclude that EU assistance to Tunisia must not support the authorities and exclusively benefit the population and civil society; urges the Tunisian authorities not to restrict the ability of Tunisian and international trade Unions and civil society organizations to operate freely;
6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the EU institutions and the Tunisian authorities.